



A Comprehensive Analysis of Missouri's Efforts to Improve the Quality of Life of Military Servicemembers and Their Families



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MEET *the* TEAM



MR. JEFFREY A. HUFFMAN

A long time Missouri resident, Jeffrey A. Huffman is a proud veteran of the United States Air Force, a talented educator for social change, and an expert in providing resources and support to military servicemembers and their families. With a master's degree in mass communication, he often engages local communities and military bases in difficult conversations about challenging social issues such as alcohol abuse or sexual violence. Mr. Huffman currently serves as the Director of Military & Veteran Affairs at the University of Central Missouri.



MS. AMY KIGER

A native of Missouri, Amy Kiger has dedicated her professional career to serving the needs of others. With a master's degree in counseling psychology, her research and practice have made a significant impact in raising the awareness of social issues related to substance abuse and domestic violence; and her work has taken her into schools, communities, and military bases throughout the state. Ms. Kiger currently serves as the Director of Campus Community Health at the University of Central Missouri.



DR. CHRIS STOCKDALE

A resident of Missouri, Chris Stockdale is a proud veteran of the United States Army, an educator dedicated to increasing educational opportunities for underserved students, and an active veterans advocate. With a doctoral degree in education, he has taught both high school and college students across the country, served in a variety of educational leadership positions, and published his research in scholarly journals. Dr. Stockdale currently serves as Associate Dean in the College of Education at the University of Central Missouri.

MISSOURI *and its* MILITARY SERVICES

From the founding of Jefferson Barracks - the oldest operating military installation west of the Mississippi River - in 1826, to the addition of Fort Leonard Wood and Whiteman Air Force Base during WWII, and the evolution of the Missouri Militia into the Missouri National Guard and Air National Guard - the state of Missouri has long been the home to a large population of full- or part-time military servicemembers and their families. And according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, in 2017 there were nearly half a million military veterans who also called Missouri their home. With a top ranked state parks system, a robust offering of cultural experiences, and its central location within the U.S., it is no surprise that servicemembers and their families find Missouri an ideal place to live.

In order to support this large population of military-connected residents, the state of Missouri has enacted hundreds of policies and programs that seek to improve the quality of life of these residents. To date, no study has been conducted that provides a comprehensive analysis of Missouri's efforts to improve the quality of life of its servicemembers and their families through policy reform or program development. This study seeks to fill this gap by 1) compiling Missouri's "military friendly" policies and programs into a single document, 2) surveying active duty servicemembers and their families on their awareness and perception of these policies and programs, and 3) analyzing the data from this study in order to make recommendations for future policy work and program development at the state level.



Many of Missouri's military friendly policies and programs are coordinated through its various state departments. For that reason, the researchers on this project met in person with representatives from state departments, reviewed departmental websites for information related to military servicemembers and their families, and, when necessary, followed up with emails and phone calls to state offices in order to seek clarification or verify information. What follows is a compilation and analysis of the policies and programs sponsored by the state of Missouri that directly seek to improve the quality of life of military servicemembers, and/or veterans, and their families. This information is followed by a list of recommendations for the state of Missouri to consider as it becomes increasingly more military friendly each year.

The background of the entire page is a blurred image of the United States flag, showing the red and white stripes and a large white star on a dark blue field.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SERVICES *by* STATE DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

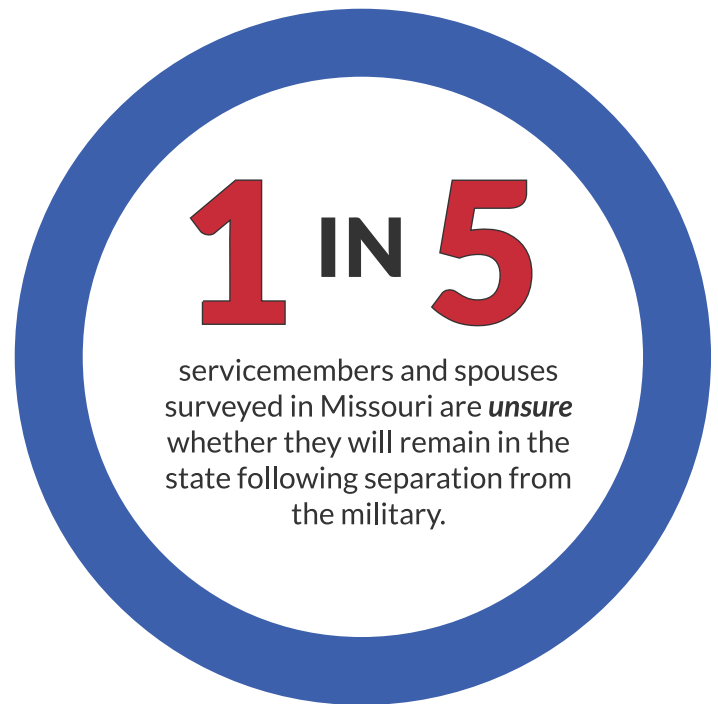
HOMEGROWN BY HEROES

The Homegrown by Heroes program allows farmers, ranchers, fishermen and producers who have served or are still serving in any branch of the U.S. military to use a special logo on the agricultural products they sell to the public. This special designation sets these farmers apart in the market, allowing these heroes' products to be visible to consumers while giving them the chance to tell their story. The Homegrown By Heroes (HBH) label is the official farmer veteran branding program of America. The label serves to inform consumers that agricultural products donning the logo were produced by U.S. military veterans. Additionally, farms and agricultural businesses displaying the logo denotes a Homegrown By Heroes-certified operation.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

MILITARY REDUCED COST PERMIT

Reduced cost Small Game Hunting and Fishing Permits are for Missouri residents who are currently (or have in the last 12 months) mobilized and serving on full-time active military duty in the National Guard (federal status) or reserve forces of the United States. This permit allows them to take fish, frogs, mussels, clams, turtles, crayfish, live bait, birds (except turkey), mammals (except deer), and to sell furbearers taken by hunting. Cost of permit is \$5.00.



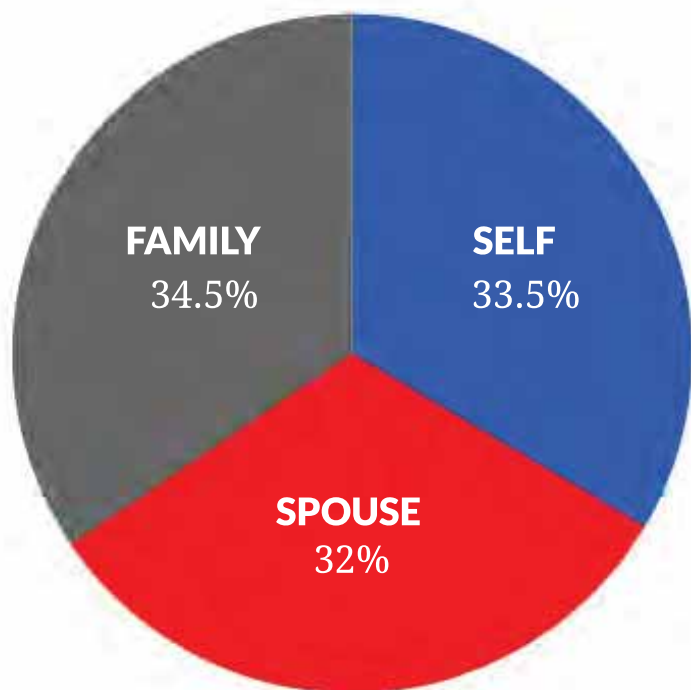
PERMIT EXEMPTIONS

Honorably discharged veterans or active personnel who have a service-related disability of 60% or greater, were a prisoner of war during military service, or are assigned as a patient to a Warrior Transition Brigade, Warrior Transition Unit, or military medical center may fish and hunt (except deer and turkey) but not trap without a permit. When a hunting permit is required (deer, turkey, migratory bird, Conservation Order permits), non-resident veterans who meet the above requirements may purchase resident permits. You must carry a certified statement of eligibility from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or orders showing assignment to a Warrior Transition Brigade or Warrior Transition Unit, or carry admission verification to a military medical center.

RESIDENT PERMITS

The following individuals can apply for hunting and fishing permits as a Missouri resident:

- All members of the U.S. armed forces stationed and residing in Missouri on permanent change of station status and immediate family members residing with them.
- Any honorably discharged military veteran having a service-related disability of 60 percent or greater, or who was a prisoner of war during military service; must carry certified statement of eligibility from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs while hunting and purchasing permits.
- Any member of the U.S. military currently assigned as a patient to a Warrior Transition Brigade, Warrior Transition Unit or a military medical center; must carry orders showing assignment to a Warrior Transition Brigade or Warrior Transition Unit, or admissions verification to a military medical center while hunting and purchasing permits.
- Missouri residents employed by the United States in the District of Columbia or serving in the U.S. armed forces. (Immediate family members who reside with them also may purchase resident permits.)



**PRIMARY ROLE IN POST-MILITARY
DECISION-MAKING**

HONOR PERMITS

Military servicemembers who purchased a Missouri hunting or fishing permit, and then couldn't use it for the full valid season because of military duty out of state, qualify for a free reinstatement of this permit privilege upon return.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

VETERAN REENTRY PROGRAM

The Missouri Department of Economic Development - Division of Workforce Development has implemented the Missouri Veteran Reentry Program. The primary mission of the program is to assist veterans who are incarcerated within the Missouri Department of Corrections to prepare them for reentry back to society and once released, assist them in a smooth and timely transition back into the workforce. The program consists of three phases, including Veteran Court, Pre-Release training and Post-Release Services. The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist will work with veterans one-on-one to provide the tools they need to obtain and retain employment to assist with successful reintegration.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) works towards ending homelessness. It is a community-based veterans assistance effort by Pathways Community Health staff. An Employment/Outreach Specialist attends Resource Fairs offered in Department of Corrections Institutional Facilities on a routine basis to determine eligibility for services.

INCARCERATED VETERANS INITIATIVE

The Incarcerated Veterans Outreach Program is specifically designed for Qualified Veterans who are in the Transitional Phase, within 3 to 6 months of their release date from Department of Corrections. The vision and initial goals for success of this program are to ensure that veterans in the state of Missouri are given the right direction and assistance to what is available in their community after their

time has been served with Department of Corrections. This program is a way to reach out to these offender veterans for the purpose of informing them about VA benefits that they may be eligible to receive after their warrants are cleared from DOC systems.

MISSOURI VETERANS PROJECT

Overseen by the Missouri Department of Corrections, the project began with a post traumatic stress disorder program. The ward offers staff-led training and classes for mental health assistance. The center holds a total of 1,800 offenders with 66 beds now set aside for the project. Of those beds, 51 are currently being filled by qualifying veteran offenders. The program holds a variety of classes on parenting guidance, anger management, cognitive behavior training and victim impact. The program has its participants following the same rules as the non-veteran offender population including a standard code of conduct. However, veteran offenders are given greater responsibilities like cleaning up, yard care, and raising and lowering the flag daily.

TREATMENT COURT PROGRAMS

Veterans treatment court programs are hybrid drug and mental health courts that use the drug court model to serve veterans struggling with addiction, serious mental illness and/or co-occurring disorders. They promote sobriety, recovery and stability through a coordinated response that involves cooperation and collaboration with the traditional partners found in drug and mental health courts, with the addition of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs health care networks, the Veterans' Benefits Administration, volunteer veteran mentors and veterans' family support organizations. Veterans treatment court programs include an important mental health component to deal with PTSD, depression, and traumatic brain injury.

DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MISSOURI MILITARY ADVOCATE

The Office of Military Advocate leads Missouri's efforts to coordinate state and local actions to preserve and expand Missouri's military installations and agencies, improve the quality of life and opportunities for

TOP POST-MILITARY PRIORITIES

#1

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

#2

PROXIMITY TO FAMILY

#3

COST OF LIVING

servicemembers and their families, and to enhance the state's defense industries. The Military Advocate serves as the liaison between state and federal branches of government and provides enhanced communication to Missouri government leaders and installation communities. The Military Advocate serves as the Executive Director of the Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission (MMPEC) and as an ex-officio member of MMPEC in the absence of the Director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

DEPARTMENT FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Veterans' Education and Training Section is the State Approving Agency (SAA) for Missouri and is located in Jefferson City within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Missouri SAA is responsible for approving GI Bill programs in Missouri for veterans and other eligible individuals. GI Bill programs may be approved for higher education, on-the-job training, apprenticeship training, and licensing and certification benefits. The programs are found in approximately 1,000 school and training establishments and businesses. The VA pays over \$40,000,000 annually in education and training benefits in Missouri. The SAA assists the VA

in conducting mandatory compliance visits to ensure benefits are paid properly and to maintain approval of programs.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is training a veteran receives while actually performing a job and earning wages. Approvable OJT programs must be a least six months and up to two years in length. The Missouri SAA is responsible for approving the facilities for the veterans to receive the GI Bill benefits while in OJT.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Apprenticeship training is on-the-job training coupled with 144 hours (minimum) per year of related technical instruction. Veterans receive their GI Bill benefits while working full time and earning wages. Apprenticeships are normally from two to five years in length. Registration with the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training is not mandatory for veteran benefits; however, it is recommended in order for the veteran to receive journeyman's papers upon successful completion of the apprenticeship.

LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION

VA benefits are paid for licensing and certification tests per Section 122 of Public Law 106-419, effective March 1, 2001. This benefit is payable under Chapters 30, 32 and 35. Note: Under Post 9/11 Chapter 33 GI Bill®, benefits are paid only one time for an approved license or certification test. The maximum payment per test is \$2,000. There is no limitation of the number of tests that may be taken except that an individual may not exceed his or her maximum entitlement.

TROOPS TO TEACHERS

The Troops to Teachers (TTT) program seeks to place retiring military personnel and other eligible persons in second careers as public school teachers in elementary, secondary, career and technical, or special education schools. Aims of this program are to relieve teacher shortages in Missouri, especially in math, science, special education and other high needs subject areas, while also assisting military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in teaching. Troops to Teachers registration is open to all veterans regardless of time in service who have an interest in education in pre-K public, charter, Bureau of Indian Affairs funded, and Department of Defense Education

Activity (DoDEA) schools as school teachers, resource teachers and non-instructional positions such as paraprofessionals, teacher aids, counselors, psychologist, school nurses, librarians, media specialists, speech therapists, audiologists, physiotherapists, resource officers, school principals and vice principals. Missouri's Veterans' Education and Training section is a liaison office for the federal Troops to Teachers Program serving veterans in the states of Missouri, Kansas and Iowa. It is among the network of 20 state TTT offices that has been established to provide participants with counseling and assistance regarding certification requirements, routes to state certification and employment leads. Financial assistance may be provided to eligible individuals. Some veterans may qualify to receive VA benefits and TTT stipends or bonus funds. Stipends up to \$5,000 may help reimburse teachers certification costs, or bonuses of \$10,000 may be provided to participating teachers in schools serving a high percentage of students from low-income families. Participants who accept the stipend or bonus must agree to teach for three years in targeted schools in accordance with the authorizing legislation.

OPERATION RECOGNITION

The Missouri legislature created Operation Recognition in September 2001 to provide honorary high school diplomas for veterans and civilian prisoners of war (POWs) who left high school before graduation to serve in the military. To date, nearly 1,300 honorary high school diplomas have been awarded to Missouri veterans. All civilian POWs who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri and all honorably discharged veterans who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri who served in the United States military and who did not return to school and complete their education after their term of service shall be eligible to receive an honorary diploma. Family members may apply for the honorary diploma on behalf of a deceased veteran. Candidates must submit an application to the Missouri Veterans Commission. Application forms are available from the commission, veterans' organizations and local school officials. After the Missouri Veterans Commission verifies that an applicant is eligible, the application is sent to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education prepares the diploma for the Governor's signature, and then makes arrangements to mail the diploma to the recipient or designated party.



DISTRICT AND COUNTY RESOURCES

Military families moving to Missouri have access to a number of educational services whether looking for K-12, higher education or adult education services. The following is a list of resources for military families.

Fort Leonard Wood and the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center (MANSCEN) is where all chemical, engineer, military police, transportation Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, Sailors and international students from allied nations receive training. Local services include:

- Waynesville R-VI School District serves most of the families at Ft. Leonard Wood with about 6,000 students enrolled. There are six elementary schools, one 6th grade school, one middle school, one high school and a career and technical education center.
- The Armed Services YMCA of Missouri has locations in downtown Waynesville, MO, and on Fort Leonard Wood. Their goal is to serve the community by offering support and opportunities that empower military families to learn, grow and thrive.

Whiteman Air Force Base is home to the 509th Bomb Wing, the 442nd Fighter Wing, the 131st Bomb Wing,

the 1-135th Attack Battalion, as well as many other vital units that stand ready to serve the nation. Local services include:

- The Knob Noster School District has four schools that serve about 1,500 students. Whiteman Elementary School, which is part of the Knob Noster R-VIII School District, is on base for children in kindergarten through fourth grade. Knob Noster Elementary School serves children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Knob Noster Middle School serves grades six to eight. Knob Noster High School offers vocational and advanced education credits for students in grades nine to 12.
- The Warrensburg School District also has a fully accredited school system serving more than 3,000 students. The system includes a high school, one middle school, four elementary schools and the Warrensburg Area Career Center serving both youth and adults.
- The Sedalia School District 200 is a fully accredited school system serving about 4,800 students. The public school system includes five elementary schools, a middle school, a junior high and a high school. There is also a Pettis County Early Childhood Coop for children 6 months to five years.

Jefferson County Military Families Support Network satisfies essential support and recreational needs, for the well-being of military families, by engaging volunteers and support from Jefferson County, Missouri on a regular basis, before, during and after deployment. Through the Network, local community resources are available when military families don't know who to call for such things as:

- Lawn mowing service
- Home and automotive repair
- Job search and preparation
- Childcare and family activities
- Local libraries offering free Skype, faxing and internet connection for families

“MISSOURI'S NOT A BAD PLACE...BUT MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING THEY COULD DO FOR **FAMILIES** AS AN INCENTIVE TO MOVE WHERE WE ARE. **TO COME OUT HERE.**

- Focus Group Participant

- Collecting toys and supplies from the community for special occasions
- Providing volunteers for community events
- Listening when someone needs to talk
- Referring people to community providers for health and family issues

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

A board of education may establish policies for granting leave of absence including military leave. Leaves and military service shall not be counted as continuous full-time service in computing tenure but shall not impair the tenure previously acquired by a teacher nor affect any credit toward tenure previously earned. Any teacher who is called into active military service with the armed forces of the United States is eligible for reinstatement upon his discharge from said service without loss of tenure. Any permanent teacher employed on a part-time basis, whether at his or her request or not, shall retain permanent status. Any probationary teacher employed on a part-time basis, whether at his or her request or not, shall retain all credit earned toward permanent status and shall continue to earn credit on a pro rata basis toward

DEPARTMENT FOR HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

EMS ADVANCED PLACEMENT TRAINING

The Department of Health & Senior Services provides advanced placement in Missouri paramedic training programs for active duty or honorably discharged military personnel. The intent of these regulatory changes is to provide recognition of the EMS training and experience obtained during military service. This recognition will provide an

opportunity for assessment of the EMS training and experience obtained through military service, the potential to apply some or all EMS training and experience obtained during military service toward civilian training requirements, and a reduction in the time required to complete training for a higher level of civilian licensure. These provisions will be available to all active duty or honorably discharged personnel of

all branches of the Armed Forces including the National Guard and Reserves. Upon verification and successful processing of the application, the Bureau of EMS will issue an “EMTBasic - United States Armed Forces” license. At any time during active duty and/or up to two (2) years after honorable discharge, the holder of a valid EMT-Basic – United States Armed Forces license may present their license to any EMT-Paramedic level training entity, accredited by the Missouri Bureau of EMS, and have their EMS knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed for advance placement into that training entity's EMT-Intermediate or EMT- Paramedic training program.

ADMINISTRATOR LICENSURE

Veterans taking the administrator licensure examinations required by the Board of Nursing Home Administrators can be reimbursed for the cost of the exam(s). The examinations are deemed approved for GI Bill reimbursement. VA will pay for the cost of the exams, up to \$2,000 for each. VA will not issue reimbursement for other fees connected with obtaining a license or certification. Payment is

issued after the required information is submitted to the VA. The VA will reimburse regardless of the number of exams taken, or the number of attempts. However, Missouri regulations limit the number of exam attempts. There are three opportunities to complete and pass the required exam(s).

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a U.S. Department of Labor funded job training program for persons 55 years of age and older who wish to enter the workforce and need extra training and job placement assistance. Priority enrollment in the program is given to veterans and qualified spouses. The purpose of the program is two-fold: to provide job skill training for the participants and to provide needed support to community host agencies, which consist of not-for-profit 501(c)(3)'s or governmental agencies. Host agencies benefit by having someone who is subsidized by the SCSEP program helping them fill positions they could not afford to pay for on their own. Program participants are provided an average of 20 hours per week of paid training.

MISSOURI LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program has found that many veterans and/or veteran spouses living in long-term care are missing benefits that the veterans program has to offer. In order to see if a veteran is eligible for benefits they first must be identified. The Ombudsman Program has made a pledge to assist in identifying those veterans or their spouses living in facilities across Missouri.

VETERANS TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

Veterans who are eligible for VA health care benefits and have a VA-authorized appointment based on availability and guidelines in place at the local facility are eligible for transportation service.

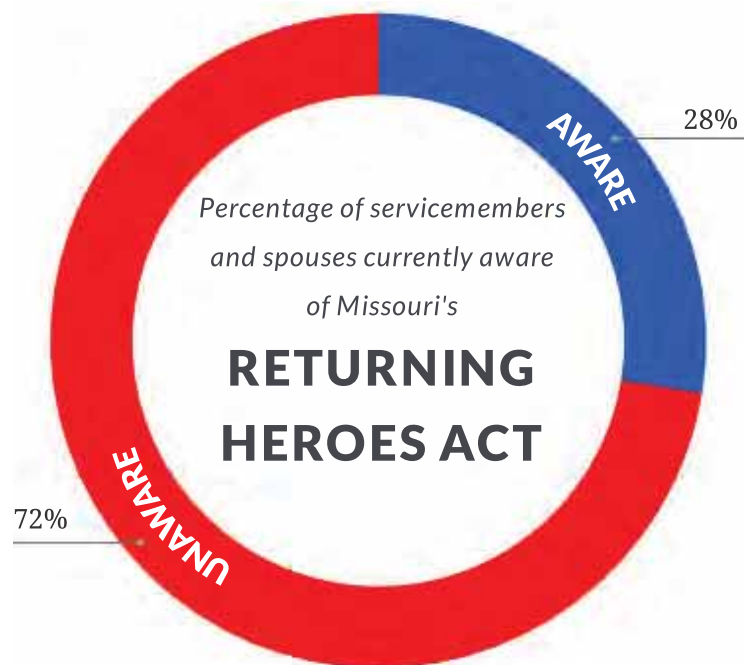
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

WARTIME VETERAN'S SURVIVOR GRANT PROGRAM

Available annually to children and spouses of veterans whose deaths or injuries were a result of combat action or were attributed to an illness that was contracted while serving in combat action, or who became 80% disabled as a result of injuries or accidents sustained in combat since September 11, 2001. Maximum grant award allowance of up to \$2,000 per semester for room and board, and the lesser of the actual cost for books or \$500.

MISSOURI RETURNING HEROES ACT

The Missouri Returning Heroes Act limits the tuition rate to \$50 per credit hour for veterans who served in armed combat in the military after September 11, 2001, and are attending public institutions of higher education. The tuition limitation expires 10 years from the date of the veteran's last discharge from service. In order to qualify, veterans must (1) have been a Missouri resident prior to entering the military, (2) have been discharged from military service under honorable conditions, (3) achieve and maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA, and (4) enroll in a program leading to a certification or an associate or bachelor's degree. Financial aid can be applied after the tuition limitation.



PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES

Harris-Stowe State University

Lincoln University

Missouri Southern State University

Missouri State University

Missouri University of Science & Technology

Missouri Western State University

Northwest Missouri State University

Southeast Missouri State University

Truman State University

University of Central Missouri

University of Missouri – Columbia

University of Missouri – Kansas City

University of Missouri – St. Louis

TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

Crowder College

East Central College

Jefferson College

Metropolitan Community College

Mineral Area College

Missouri State University – West Plains

Moberly Area Community College

North Central Missouri College

Ozarks Technical Community College

St. Charles Community College

St. Louis Community College

State Fair Community College

State Technical College of Missouri

Three Rivers College

Designated Veterans Center

VA Work Study Participant

ROTC or Similar Program

School-Specific Scholarships/Aid

Veterans Benefits (VA) Liaison

Student Veterans Organization (Currently)

Designated Military-Friendly

Military Credit Review Program

Priority Enrollment

A+ SCHOLARSHIP

Students who are active duty military dependents, and students who are dependents of retired military who relocate to Missouri within one year of the parent's retirement from active duty, who, in the school year immediately preceding graduation, meet all other A+ eligibility requirements shall be exempt from the three-year attendance requirement.

BRIGHT FLIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

The Missouri Higher Education Academic Scholarship Program is a merit-based program that encourages top-ranked high school seniors to attend approved Missouri postsecondary schools. If a Bright Flight Scholarship recipient cannot attend an approved institution because of military service in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, the student will be offered the scholarship if he or she returns to full-time status within six months after ending the military service and verifying to the Coordinating Board of Higher Education that the service was satisfactorily completed.

MULTISTATE COLLABORATIVE ON MILITARY CREDIT

Lumina Foundation awarded a \$900,000 grant to the Midwestern Higher Education Compact to assist in an interstate partnership of 13 states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) to advance best practices designed to ease the transition of veterans and their families from military life to college campuses, with special reference to translating competencies acquired through military training and experiences into milestones toward completing a college degree or earning a certificate or license.

NATIONAL GUARD BENEFITS

National Guard members can receive \$276.20/SH up to 100% of in-state rate; must maintain 2.5 GPA and must use Federal Tuition Assistance first and pays only tuition. Caps at 15 credit hours for Fall and Spring, and 9 credit hours for Summer.

RESIDENCY STATUS

Any individual who is in the process of separating from any branch of the military with an honorable discharge

or a general discharge shall have student resident status for in-state tuition at a four-year institution or in-state, in-district tuition at a two-year institution. To be eligible, the individual must demonstrate presence and declare residency within the state and, for attendance at a community college, declare residency within the institution's taxing district. Members of the Missouri National Guard or in a reserve component of the Armed Forces shall be deemed to be domiciled in the state for purposes of eligibility for in-state tuition at any approved public institution in the state. To be eligible, the individual must demonstrate presence in the state and, for attendance at a community college, within the institution's taxing district.

IN-STATE TUITION

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, all dependents of active duty military personnel, or activated or temporarily mobilized reservists or guard members, assigned to a permanent duty station or workplace geographically located in this state, who reside in this state, shall be deemed to be domiciled in this state for purposes of eligibility for in-state tuition and shall be eligible to receive in-state tuition at public institutions of higher education in this state. All such dependents shall be afforded the same educational benefits as any other individual receiving in-state tuition so long as he or she is continuously enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program of an institution of higher education in Missouri, or transferring between Missouri institutions of higher education or from an undergraduate degree program to a graduate degree program.

DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION

REIMBURSEMENT FOR LICENSING EXAMS

Veterans taking one of the 145 professional state licensing or certification examinations required by the Department of Insurance, Finance and Professional Registration can be reimbursed for the cost of the exam. Veterans Affairs will pay for the cost of the tests, up to \$2,000 for each test. Veterans Affairs will not issue reimbursement for other fees connected with obtaining a license or certification. Payment is issued after submitting the required

information to the VA. The VA will reimburse regardless of the number of exams taken, or the number of attempts. However, Missouri regulations may limit the number of exam attempts. Check with the state regulator for details.

CONTINUING EDUCATION WAIVER FOR INSURANCE PRODUCER LICENSES

Licensed producers selling Long-term Care Partnership policies must complete four hours of Partnership CE every two years as part of the above required sixteen hours. These requirements may be waived if an individual is on active duty in the Armed Forces for an extended time.

REFUSAL TO ISSUE AUTO INSURANCE

Insurers cannot refuse to write or surcharge solely because an armed services applicant has no prior insurance.

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION

Every professional licensing board or commission in this state shall, upon presentation of satisfactory evidence by an applicant for certification or licensure, accept education, training, or service completed by an individual who is a member of the United States Armed Forces or Reserves, the National Guard of any state, the military reserves of any state, or the naval militia of any state toward the qualifications to receive the license or certification.

“

THE BIGGEST THING FOR ME IS BEING ABLE TO SUPPORT MYSELF AND PAY MY BILLS WHILE TRYING TO GO TO SCHOOL FULL-TIME .

- Focus Group Participant

”

Any person licensed or certified to practice a trade or profession by the state of Missouri or any branch or agency thereof which requires an annual period of continuing education or training as a condition of continued or renewed licensing or certification, and who is or becomes a member of the National Guard or of any reserve component of the Armed Forces of

the United States who is called to full-time active duty in the service of the United States under competent orders shall, during the period of full-time active duty, be exempted from any such requirement for continuing education or training without his status, license, certification or right to practice his trade or profession being affected and shall not be required, upon returning from full-time active duty, to make up or retake any training or education for which he was exempt under the provisions of this section. Missouri residents performing authorized military service who own a motor vehicle are not required to maintain financial responsibility on the vehicle until the military service is completed, unless it is operated by another driver during that time.

Missouri residents who fail to renew his or her driver's license while performing authorized military service are exempt from taking a complete examination when renewing his or her license within ninety days after completing such military service and re-establishing residence within the state; any motor vehicle registration that expires for any Missouri resident performing authorized military service may be renewed within sixty days of completing such military service without being required to pay a delinquent registration fee; however, such motor vehicle shall not be operated while the person is performing such military service unless the motor vehicle registration is renewed.

Any Missouri resident enrolled by the supreme court of Missouri or licensed, registered or certified under chapter 168, 256, 317, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 375, 640 or 644, and interpreters licensed under sections 209.319 to 209.339, whose license, registration or certification expires while performing

authorized military service, may renew such license, registration or certification within sixty days of completing authorized military service without penalty. In the case of corporate registration reports, franchise tax reports or other reports required to be filed with the office of secretary of state, where the filing of such report would be delayed because of a

person performing authorized military service, such reports shall be filed without penalty within one hundred twenty days of the completion of such military service. Missouri residents performing authorized military service who are subject to a criminal summons for a traffic violation will not be subject to nonappearance sanctions for such violation until after one hundred eighty days after the completion of such military service.

Missouri residents performing authorized military service who are required under state law to file financial disclosure reports are not required to file such reports while performing such military service; however, such reports covering that period of time that such military service is performed shall be filed within one hundred eighty days after the completion of such military service.

Missouri residents with an indebtedness, liability or obligation for state income tax or property tax on personal or real property who are performing authorized military service or a spouse of such person filing a combined return or owning property jointly shall be granted an extension to file any papers or to pay any obligation until one hundred eighty days after the completion of such military service or continuous hospitalization as a result of such military service. No state agency, board, commission or administrative tribunal shall take any administrative action against any person performing authorized military service for that person's failure to take any required action or meet any required obligation.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

VETERANS PREFERENCE FOR EMPLOYMENT

Missouri Veterans receive five-point preference when testing for any position with the state, with a ten point preference for a service-connected disabled veteran. Spouses of eligible veterans can also qualify for Veterans Preference for state testing. In addition, state agencies which administer federally funded employment and training programs for veterans shall give priority to qualified veterans and other eligible persons.



48%

of servicemembers and spouses surveyed in Missouri consider **Veterans Preference for State Employment** an influential factor in choosing a place of residence post-military.

VETERANS' UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Subject to appropriation and availability of funds in the War on Terror Unemployment Compensation Fund, any war on terror veteran shall be entitled to receive veterans' unemployment compensation benefits. A war on terror veteran shall be entitled to a weekly benefit amount of eight percent (8%) of the wages paid to the war on terror veteran during the calendar quarter in which the war on terror veteran earned the highest amount within the five (5) completed calendar quarters in which the war on terror veteran received wages immediately before deployment. However, the maximum weekly benefit amount shall not exceed one thousand one hundred fifty- three dollars and sixty-four cents (\$1,153.64). A war on terror veteran shall be entitled to receive a weekly benefit amount for twenty-six (26) weeks. Any employer who is found in any Missouri court or United States district court located in Missouri to have terminated, demoted, or taken an adverse employment action against a war on terror veteran due to his or her absence while deployed shall be subject to an administrative penalty in the amount of thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000).

COMMERCIAL DRIVER EXAM (CDL) EXEMPTIONS

Missouri allows active duty military or retired military personnel to complete an application for waiver of skills testing to obtain a commercial driver license. Applicant must have a minimum of 60 days active duty driving experience in a commercial motor vehicle for the military (not vehicle training) within the 2 years prior to date of application for waiver. Applicants must still complete the required knowledge examinations for the commercial driver license class being applied for.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR TRAILING SPOUSES

Missouri law allows spouses of active or reserve military personnel to be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits if leaving their job to relocate with their spouse.

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES FOR NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

To support Missouri's National Guard, the Division of Behavioral Health is authorizing contracted providers to waive the standard means test (SMT) for all currently serving Guard servicemembers, thereby offering access to consultation, evaluations, assessments, treatment, and recovery support services at no cost except for Substance Abuse Traffic Offender Program (SATOP) services. Currently serving Guard servicemembers mandated to complete a SATOP program will be required to pay the applicable SATOP fees; however, waiving the SMT results in payment of the minimum allowable SATOP program fee.

PROVIDER MAPS

The Department of Mental Health developed a web-based interactive map that assists SMVF in finding a behavioral health clinician. Filters on the map help SMVF find clinicians that meet their

specific needs. In addition, The Missouri Department of Mental Health, in partnership with the Missouri Behavioral Health Alliance, is developing a web-based interactive map that will assist military persons in easily finding treatment providers in the state who can help them with their unique behavioral health needs.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI)

NAMI offers NAMI Homefront, which is designed to address the unique needs of family, caregivers and friends of those who have served or are currently serving our country. The program is taught by trained family members of servicemembers/veterans living with mental health conditions.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

MISSOURI STATE PARKS INITIATIVE

The Department of Natural Resources has developed a new website devoted to veteran recruitment. Recruiting and hiring military veterans is one of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' top priorities. Veterans interested in applying for positions with Missouri State Parks are encouraged to include military experience in their application.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION

The Missouri Veterans Commission is a state agency established by Missouri statute to aid all veterans, their dependents, and legal representatives by providing information regarding the rights of veterans and their dependents and to assist veterans accessing their available benefits through state and federal government. The Missouri Veterans Commission, a division of the Department of Public Safety, operates seven state Veterans Homes, five state Veterans Cemeteries, and the Veterans Services Program. The Commission is committed to honoring and serving Missouri's Veterans whose dedication



and sacrifices have preserved our nation and its freedoms.

WOMEN VETERANS INITIATIVE

The Missouri Veterans Commission is dedicated to finding all women veterans, past, present and future. It has appointed a women veterans coordinator and her mission is to ensure that Missouri women veterans have equitable access to federal and state veterans services and to ensure women veterans are aware of their VA benefits; who to contact; and how to apply for these benefits. Currently there are over 44,894 countable women veterans in Missouri, and it is estimated that 30-40% have not applied. Women Veterans have unique issues that need to be addressed and they need a contact person who can give them guidance in the right direction for assistance. A full continuum of comprehensive medical services including health promotion and disease prevention, primary care, women's gender-specific health care; e.g., hormone replacement therapy, breast and gynecological care, maternity and limited infertility (excluding in-vitro fertilization), acute medical/surgical, telephone triage, emergency and substance abuse treatment, mental health, domiciliary, rehabilitation and long term care. VA researchers at many VA facilities also conduct medical research on women's health.

FIREFIGHTER VETERANS INITIATIVE

Missouri's Governor's Office along with the Office of the State Fire Marshal created a program to identify interested and eligible veterans and provide them with the information and tools to pursue fulfilling career and volunteer opportunities in the fire service. This half-day experience includes hands on participation in challenging skill evolutions for multiple discipline job duties which firefighters are routinely called upon to perform in times of emergency. Attendees are provided with valuable information regarding fire service training and certification requirements, benefit and funding opportunities, and have the chance to network with fire service personnel of various ranks and roles from departments throughout the State. Fire service personnel who have transitioned from the military into the rewarding field of the fire service are also on hand to share their personal stories.

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

The State of Missouri has 41 highly trained and accredited Veterans Service Officers to assist in filing for VA benefits. They are located across the state and are divided into 5 regions and almost every county.

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I SAID THAT I WASN'T GOING TO STAY IN MISSOURI, BUT IF THERE WAS SOMETHING LIKE **A RELIABLE JOB** THAT CAN DEFINITELY HELP **PAY THE BILLS** WHILE **IN SCHOOL FULL-TIME**, THEN I WOULD RECONSIDER.

- Focus Group Participant

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Service Officers are available for any follow-up work necessary with the VA to obtain the maximum amount of earned benefits due any eligible Veterans and/or dependents. VSO's are thoroughly trained and knowledgeable in all areas of Veterans benefits, including service-connected compensation, non-service connected disability pension, education and training, vocational rehabilitation, burial, and survivor benefits. They will also assist claimants with health care eligibility, VA Home Loan Guaranty, and other Veterans benefits, including those offered by the state. Veterans Service Officers have access to the VA's Benefit Delivery Network system, allowing them to expedite the filing of claims and delivery of earned benefits to Veterans. Claimants must provide written authorization before the VA will grant access to a particular Veteran's file. This can be done when the Veteran applies for their earned benefits.

OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The Missouri Veterans Commission Ombudsman assists veterans, servicemembers and their families with extraordinary needs that are not being met by other agencies or organizations. The Ombudsman acts as a referral source to local, state and national resources available to address these needs.

VETERANS HOMES

The Missouri Veterans Homes manage a total of 1,350 beds that provide long term skilled nursing care in compliance with 157 Federal Department of Veterans Affairs regulations. The Homes are located in Cameron, Cape Girardeau, Mexico, Mount Vernon, St. James, St. Louis, and Warrensburg. To be eligible for admission, a Veteran during his or her lifetime must have lived in Missouri for 180 days, meet the criteria for Veteran status established by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and require institutional health care services. Eligibility and admission decisions are made by a team comprised of

the Administrator, Physician, Director of Nursing, Social Worker, Veterans Service Officer, and other professionals as needed. Each Missouri Veterans Home employs a licensed nursing home administrator, has registered nurses on duty 24 hours per day, and provides physician care; physical, speech, occupational and recreational therapy; medications; cosmetology; maintenance, environmental and social services, and dietary specialists. Each home has a secured dementia unit that includes a dining room, activity area and enclosed courtyard. In addition to excellent food, Missouri Veterans Homes provide medical and skilled nursing care; recreational and rehabilitative therapy; social services and pastoral services.

VETERANS CEMETERY PROGRAM

From the initial concept of a veterans cemetery program, one operational philosophy has remained constant; to honor our veterans for their service and sacrifice. With that goal in mind, the Missouri Veterans Commission has created a network of veterans cemeteries so that every Missouri veteran will have reasonable access to a Veterans cemetery. Five cemeteries are in operation at this time; Springfield, Higginsville, Bloomfield, Ft. Leonard Wood, and Jacksonville.

INTERMENT SERVICES

Interment services are provided to veterans, their spouses, and eligible dependent children. There is no charge for any of the services provided. These services include opening and closing of the grave, provision of a concrete grave liner, upright granite headstones, full military honors for the veteran, and perpetual care. Those who choose cremation have the choice of in-ground burial or placement within a columbarium niche. Pre-registration for future planning purposes is also available for veterans and their eligible family members. Pre-planning for future burial is available at each of the cemeteries.

KANSAS CITY MINORITY VETERANS INITIATIVE

The Kansas City Minority Veterans Initiative is a pilot project (initiative) designed to reach out to these Veterans for the purpose of informing them of benefits that they may be eligible to receive. Included in this group are dependents of Veterans who generally are considered least informed of benefits possibly afforded to them. The office also serves as an information resource station, providing pamphlets and booklets on various state and federal benefit programs. A Veterans Service Officer is also available to assist Veterans with submitting claims, appealing claims, assisting with pensions and other assistance that the Veterans may need.

VETERANS TRUST FUND

The Veterans Trust Fund, is a state fund established to receive monies generated by individual income taxes, corporate taxes, grants, gifts, bequests, the federal government, or other sources. This fund shall be administered by the executive director with approval of the commission for purposes authorized under sections 42.002 to 42.135 and section 143.1001, RSMo, and appropriated by the state.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

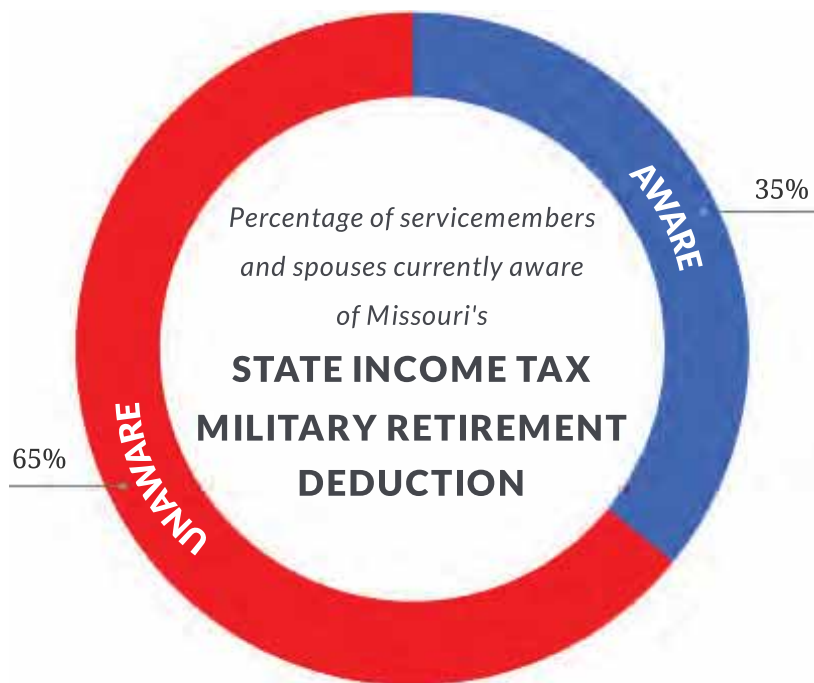
MILITARY LIAISON

Missouri Department of Revenue has a Military Liaison who is the point of contact for all current and prior military personnel and their families for any questions or issues concerning any division of the Department.

STATE INCOME TAX

As of January 1, 2016 100% of retirement benefits received by a taxpayer as a result of their service in the Armed Forces of the United States, including reserve components and the National Guard of this state, as defined in Sections 101(3) and 109 of Title 32, United States Code, and any other military force organized under the laws of this state can deduct from the taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income in the calculation of Missouri taxable income.

A Veteran may be eligible for a 180-day extension to file state income tax after the last day they were in a combat zone, have a qualifying service outside of the combat zone, or served in a contingency operation.



MILITARY INCOME DEDUCTION

The Department of Revenue provides a deduction for military income earned as a member of the active duty component of the Armed Forces of the United States.

PROPERTY TAX FOR DISABLED VETERANS

Certain individuals are eligible to claim up to \$750 if they pay rent or \$1,100 if they pay real estate tax on the home they own and occupy. If renting from a facility that does not pay property taxes, you are not eligible for a Property Tax Credit. The credit is available to individuals 65 years of age or older, 100% disabled, 60 years of age or older and receiving surviving spouse benefits, and to 100% disabled veterans as a result of military service. If a veteran is 100% disabled (NOT due to military service) payments and benefits are included into Property Tax Credit household income. Veteran payments and benefits include education or training allowances, disability compensation, grants, and insurance proceeds. If a

Veteran is 100% disabled as a result of military service, he or she is not required to include your veteran payments and benefits on the Property Tax Credit form. A letter from the Veterans Administration indicating the disability is 100% from military service needs to be attached to the Property Tax Credit form.

MOTORCYCLE SKILLS TESTING WAIVER

Active duty members of the U.S. armed forces are permitted to present a proof of completion card from a military Motorcycle Rider Training Course (MRTC) to waive the driving skills portion of the motorcycle endorsement test. The military course must meet or exceed the criteria of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF).

Only approved MSF rider course completion cards issued by a military MRTC will be acceptable. Military applicants must also submit proof of successful completion of the Missouri State Highway Patrol motorcycle written examination.

DRIVERS LICENSE

Missouri Department of Revenue will have the designation of “VETERAN” placed upon the back of a Missouri driver or non-driver license upon request with the proper documentation. Missouri Department of Revenue will allow for driver license suspensions and revocations to be placed in a stayed status for certain cases up to 60 days after military service ends.

COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE

Missouri allows active duty military or retired military personnel to complete an application for waiver of skills testing to obtain a commercial driver license. Applicant must have been regularly employed within 90 days prior to waiver application date in a job requiring operation of a commercial motor vehicle and have operated the commercial vehicle for the military for at least 60 days during the 2 years immediately preceding application date. Applicants must still complete the required knowledge examinations for the commercial driver license class applied for.

VEHICLE TITLING AND INSPECTIONS

Military applicants may authorize another individual to sign the General Affidavit (Form 768) indicating the vehicle is out-of-state and will be inspected within 10 days of returning to Missouri, if applicable. A power of attorney or a statement from the military applicant allowing the signature is not required. Military applicants are allowed 180 days from completion of military service before a title penalty is assessed on the purchase of a motor vehicle, trailer, boat, outboard motor, all terrain vehicle, or manufactured home. Military applicants may have a commissioned officer or other out-of-state law enforcement officer sign an inspection form to verify the vehicle identification number (VIN) and odometer reading of a vehicle previously titled out of state (ID/OD inspection).

VEHICLE REGISTRATION RENEWAL

Military applicants may renew an expired motor vehicle registration up to 60 days after completion of military service without a \$5 renewal penalty. The vehicle may not be operated during the period the registration is expired. With each transaction the applicant must submit official orders from the appropriate military authority as evidence of military service and the date of discharge.

EXTENSIONS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS

Any person engaged in the performance of active duty in a United States military conflict for 30 days or more, will receive an extension for complying with certain motor vehicle laws. Active duty military personnel who sell a vehicle and are deployed before a new vehicle can be purchased are allowed an extension of 180 days after return to purchase a vehicle and obtain the tax allowance. A copy of their military orders of completion of deployment must be submitted. This extension also applies to “total loss” vehicle tax credits.

SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES

Missouri Department of Revenue offers several specialty plates, personalized plates and placards that recognize service and awards for members of the



military with proper documentation. Specialty plates and placards allow the veteran to park his or her motor vehicle, weighing not more than 6,000 pounds, without charge in either a metered parking space contingent upon approval of local authorities or in a parking lot or garage on any public college or university in the state of Missouri, except during a special event where a separate parking fee may apply. Disabled Veteran specialty license plates are available to eligible applicants at no fee (limit one set per applicant). To qualify for Disabled Veteran specialty license plates, you must be a Missouri resident who has served in and was honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILD SUPPORT

According to state statute, a custodial parent or noncustodial parent who has been called to active duty for a period of more than 30 days may request a review and modification due to an income change. The income change is considered a substantial change in circumstances for purposes of review and modification. That means Child Support will complete a review of the order regardless of the age of the order

and complete a modification regardless of whether the new amount differs by 20 percent from the existing obligation. If a military member has experienced a change in income and has an obligation to repay past-due support, they may request that Child Support adjust the past-due payment amount. If a military member is ordered to provide health care coverage for their child(ren) and have not done so, the Department of Social Services will ask the military to enroll the child(ren) in the appropriate health care plan.

FOOD STAMP BENEFITS

Qualified immigrants who have a military connection can receive food stamp benefits for an unlimited period of time. They do not have to meet the five year waiting period. A qualified immigrant with a military connection is:

- a veteran who was on active duty 24 months and was honorably discharged for reasons other than citizenship and their spouses or unmarried dependent children,
- active duty personnel (other than active duty for training) and their spouses or unmarried dependent children,
- the spouse of a citizen who is a veteran or on active duty with the military, OR
- the surviving spouse of a deceased veteran

or individual on active duty, provided the spouse has not remarried and the marriage meets one of the following requirements:

- married at least 1 year; or
- married before the end of a 15-year time span following the end of the period of military service in which injury that caused the military spouse's death was incurred or aggravated; or
- married for any period if a child was born of the marriage or was born before the marriage.

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WHATEVER OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE FOR MY WIFE...

IT'S TOTALLY HER DECISION WHERE WE GO.

- Focus Group Participant

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An immigrant spouse of a veteran or an individual on active duty with the military, is an eligible immigrant as long as the couple remains married. If the couple divorces, the immigrant spouse must meet one of the other immigrant criteria to continue eligibility for food stamp benefits. The definition of a dependent child is a biological or adopted unmarried child under age 18 or claimed on the veteran's or active duty person's income tax form. An immigrant dependent child remains eligible for food stamp benefits even if the parents divorce and the child does not live with the veteran/active duty person.

INTERSTATE COMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

Children of families in the military often face educational barriers due to their parents' deployment or frequent moves. The educational records and enrollment procedures for children of military families transferring to/from Missouri fall under the guidelines of the Interstate Compact listed above. Some of the Compact's 18 Articles which could impact Children's Division case management are highlighted below:

- The provisions of the compact shall apply only to local education agencies and to the children of active duty military members or veterans (including the National Guard or Reserve) who

are severely injured, medically discharged, retired from service, or died on active duty or as a result of injuries sustained on active duty, for a period of one year after discharge, retirement or death.

- In the event that official education records cannot be released to the parents for the purpose of transfer, the custodian of the records in the sending state shall prepare and furnish to the parent a complete set of unofficial educational records. The school in the receiving state shall enroll and appropriately place the student based on the information provided in the unofficial records pending validation by the official records, as quickly as possible.

- Simultaneous

with the enrollment and conditional placement of the student, the school in the receiving state shall request the student's official education record from the school in the sending state. The sending state will process and furnish the official records within ten days or within such time as is reasonably determined under the Compact.

- Compacting states shall give thirty days from the date of enrollment or within such time as is reasonably determined to obtain any immunization(s) required by the state.
- Kindergarten/First grade entrance age shall be allowed to continue their enrollment at grade level in the receiving state commensurate with their grade level (including Kindergarten) from a local education agency in the sending state at the time of transition, regardless of age. A student that has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in the local education agency in the sending state, shall be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade level in the receiving state, regardless of age.
- Students whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted additional excused absences at the discretion of the local education agency superintendent to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian relative to

such leave or deployment of the parent or guardian.

- A local education agency shall be prohibited from charging local tuition to a transitioning military child in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis who lives in a jurisdiction other than that of the custodial parent.
- The transitioning military child, placed in the care of a non-custodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis who lives in another jurisdiction other than that of the custodial parent, may continue to attend the school in which he/she was enrolled while residing with the custodial parent.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

HEROES WAY DESIGNATION PROGRAM

This program allows for Missouri's interstate or state-numbered highway interchanges, bridges or segments of highway on state highway system to be designated honoring the fallen Missouri heroes who have been killed in action while performing active military duty with the Armed Forces, and who was a Missouri resident at the time he or she was killed in action. Any individual who is related by marriage, adoption, or consanguinity (a blood relative) within the second degree to the member of the United States Armed Forces who was killed in action may apply for a designation. No interchange, bridge or a segment of highway shall receive more than one designation and no more than one Heroes Way designation will be placed for a given fallen soldier. Two signs shall be erected for each interchange, bridge or highway designation. The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) administers the program. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission set the fees for these designation signs.

SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN PREFERENCE

A preference will be given to all contracts for the performance of any job or service to service-disabled veteran business either doing business as Missouri firms, corporations, or individuals; or which maintain

Missouri offices or places of business, when the quality of performance promised is equal or better and the price quoted is the same or less or whenever competing bids, in their entirety, are comparable.

DRIVER LICENSE RENEWAL

If a member of the military and/or dependent's driver license expires or is misplaced or stolen while they are out of state, they may request a Mail-In License Application (DOR-4317), or download the form from the Missouri Department of Transportation's website.

MEMORIAL HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE PROGRAM

Under certain conditions, and within specific guidelines, Missouri highways and bridges may be named after an individual (deceased 2 years), an event, place or organization. No bridge or section of a highway on the state highway system may be designated after more than one individual, event, place or organization. Each individual, event, place or organization shall only be eligible for one bridge or highway designation. Two signs shall be erected for each highway and bridge designation on the state's highway system. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission sets the fees for these memorial designation signs.

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

No outdoor advertising which is regulated by subdivision (1), (3) or (4) of section 226.520 or subsection 1 of section 226.527 shall be erected or maintained on or after August 28, 1992, without a one-time permanent permit issued by the state highways and transportation commission. Application for permits shall be made to the state highways and transportation commission on forms furnished by the commission and shall be accompanied by a permit fee of two hundred dollars for all signs. Veterans' organizations as defined in subdivision (14) of section 313.005 shall be granted a permit for signs less than seventy-six square feet without payment of the fee. Additionally, veterans organizations are not required to pay biennial inspection fees every two years following the issuance of a state license.

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANTS

The Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program provides federal funding, through a formula grant, to State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) to hire dedicated staff to provide individualized career and training-related services to veterans and to assist employers with filling open positions with job-seeking veterans. The JVSG program allows the Division of Workforce Development to fund Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist positions, Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) positions and Consolidated DVOP/LVER positions. DVOP Specialists provide individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. Veterans with barriers include homeless veterans and vocational rehabilitation clients. Local Veterans' Employment Representatives conduct outreach to employers and business associations and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring managers to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of disabled veterans. Consolidated position staff serve in a dual role as DVOP and LVER.

SHOW-ME HEROES/U.S. ARMY CAREER SKILLS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Show-Me Heroes/U.S. Army Career Skills Internship (CSP) program is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Leonard Wood and the Division of Workforce Development and the Show-Me Heroes Program. The CSP Internship program is available to eligible servicemembers who are within 180 days of

completing their active duty service obligation. Eligibility requirements include: anticipated honorable or honorable under general conditions discharge, must have 180 days of continuous active duty service, and must want to participate. Participants are placed with Missouri employers for up to 120 days to gain civilian experience pre-release from active duty.

WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program is a federal income tax credit incentive provided to private sector employers. An employer may be eligible for WOTC when they hire from certain target groups of job seekers who face employment barriers. The program included five veteran target groups, including veterans receiving SNAP benefits, veterans with a service-connected disability hired within one year of discharge and veterans that are unemployed.

The WOTC tax credit is a one-time tax credit for each new hire meeting the eligibility criteria. Maximum tax credits range from \$2,400 to \$9,600 per employee, depending on the target group.

PRIORITY OF SERVICES

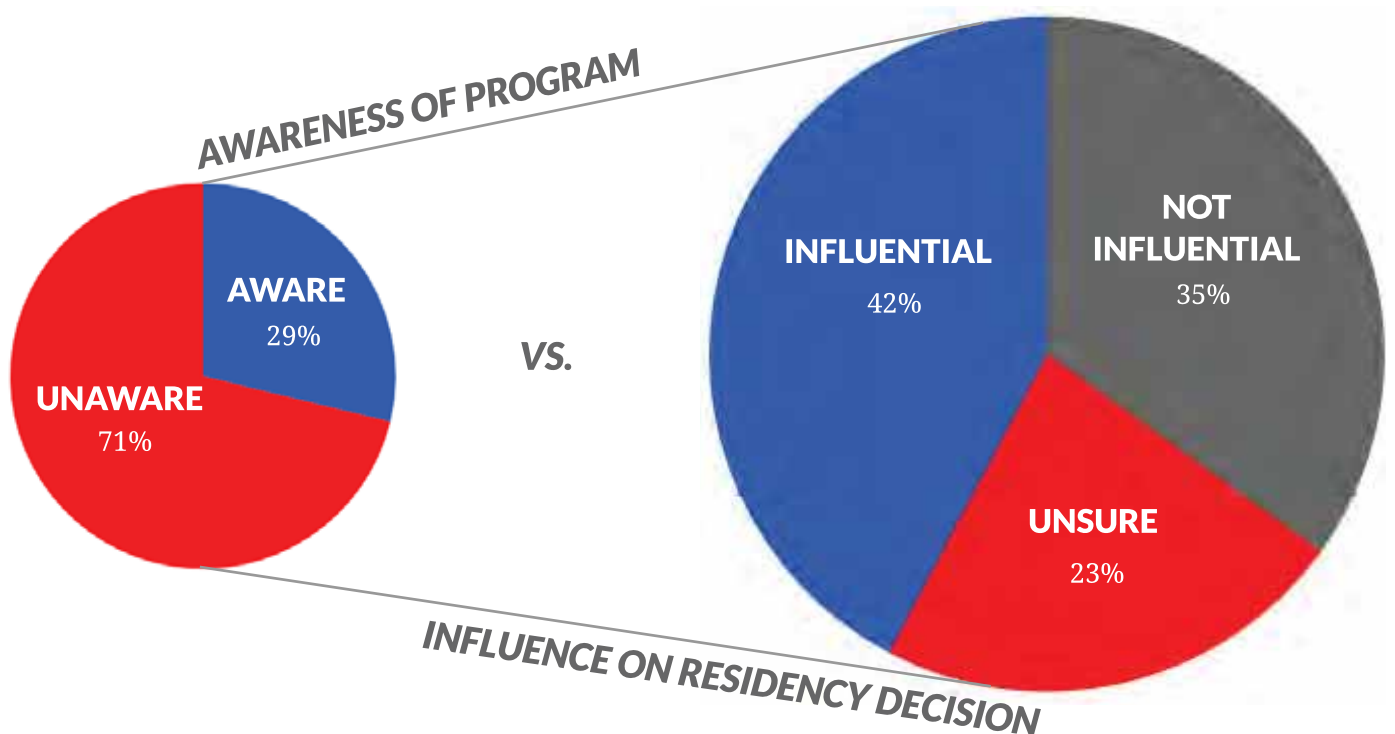
Veterans and spouses who meet the eligibility requirements for a program of service are to receive access either earlier in time than the non-eligible person or instead of or before the non-eligible person. Veterans and eligible spouses receive free access to:

- Career assessment and counseling
- Assistance with résumés, cover letters, and interviewing skills
- Job placement assistance
- Job search workshops
- Labor market information
- Computers with internet access
- Computer program assistance
- Online job application assistance

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**IT'S HARDER FOR THE
YOUNGER TROOPS TO
SEE WHERE THEY'RE
GOING IN THEIR
FUTURE .**
- Focus Group Participant”

SHOW-ME HEROES ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

The Show-Me Heroes On-the-Job Training (SMH-OJT) program targets returning National Guard, Reservists, and recently separated active-duty servicemembers and spouses. Through the program, employers hiring an eligible Veteran, servicemember or spouse are reimbursed for 50 percent of the participant's wages during a contracted training period. An eligible **veteran** must meet the federal definition of a veteran, have a discharge status other than dishonorable, and not be more than one year from date of discharge from active duty. An eligible **military servicemember** must be either a member of a Reserve Component of the US Armed Forces (National Guard, Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve, or Coast Guard Reserve), must have been deployed for at least four months, and must not be more than one year past date of discharge from a deployment. An eligible **military spouse** must be unemployed and either the spouse of a member of the active duty U.S. military personnel, or the spouse of a member of the Active or Reserve Component of the US Armed Forces (National Guard, Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve, or Coast Guard Reserve) in which the servicemember has been deployed for at least 4 months, and where the servicemember is not over one year from date of discharge from a deployment.



- Referrals to jobs, supportive services, and training resources
- Assistive technology hardware and software for special needs

An eligible veteran must have served at least one day in active military, naval, or air service and have been discharged under "other than dishonorable" conditions. Additionally, an eligible spouse of a veteran who died of a service-connected disability, has been listed for at least 90 days as missing in action, captured in the line of duty by a foreign government or power, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power, has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, or has died while a total disability, resulting from a service-connected disability, was in existence.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services (VR&E) program is a joint collaboration between the U.S. Veteran's Administration (VA) and the Division of Workforce Development to assist disabled veterans who have completed or are about to complete their VR&E-funded education or to assist those who have qualified for VR&E funds but have yet to start their educational program. Participants receive assistance with Employment Services and/or Labor Market Information.

VETERANS FIRST CONTRACTING PROGRAM

Service-disabled veterans who own their own business and have veteran certification from both the state of Missouri as well as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are eligible to receive priority for some contracts. The VA also gives priority to some veteran-owned small businesses (VOSB) contracts, and has special authority to do so for service-disabled veteran-owned small business/ veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB/VOSB) set-aside and sole source contracts. These programs result in a large number of Missouri SDVOSB and VOSB companies receiving federal contracts.



HILTON HONORS

The Hilton Honors Military Program is aimed at giving back to veterans, military service personnel and their spouses. In partnership with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and the Missouri Division of Workforce Development, Hilton Honors will donate points to eligible transitioning servicemembers, veterans, and military spouses. Eligible veterans may receive a 100,000-point donation to provide assistance with hotel expenses while conducting job-search activities away from home, including job searching, interviewing, training for a new job or searching for housing due to a new job. Individuals must meet one of the following criteria:

- Have served on active military duty and been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable;
- Be a transitioning servicemember within 24 months of retirement or 12 months of separation;
- Be a member of a National Guard or Reserve component; or
- Be the current spouse of a military servicemember/veteran or National Guard or Reserve member.

FINDINGS *and* RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDING #1 - Information on the state programs and policies designed to support military servicemembers and their families is difficult to find.

RECOMMENDATION #1 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri develop and launch a comprehensive website for all military-connected benefits and programs.

While every department in the state of Missouri offers military-friendly services, these are not easily accessible in a centralized location. The most comprehensive resources currently available are the *State Veterans Benefits Guide* published by the Missouri Veterans Commission and the Veterans - MO.gov website—yet many active servicemembers will not yet consider themselves a veteran, and may, therefore assume they would not qualify for these benefits. Likewise, military spouses may not be aware of the benefits they can access through this guide alone. Finally, a website centralizing programs and policies would be an important tool for enhancing public and third-party service providers' ability to support servicemembers when transitioning.

FINDING #2- Awareness of the state programs and policies designed to support military servicemembers and their families sampled in the study varied from 15% to 60% among survey respondents.

RECOMMENDATION #2- It is recommended that the state of Missouri market its programs and policies designed to support military servicemembers and their families to those assigned to its military installations.

In many instances, survey respondents reported positive perceptions of state policies and programs although they were unaware of them prior to taking part in the survey. To ensure that servicemembers and their spouses are able to consider all potential state benefits when making decisions about where to reside upon separation from the military, it would be in the state's interest to raise awareness of its programs and policies by directly marketing them to servicemembers and their spouses. The survey also found most servicemembers had decided where to reside at least 12 months prior to separation, therefore, the marketing should begin well before then.

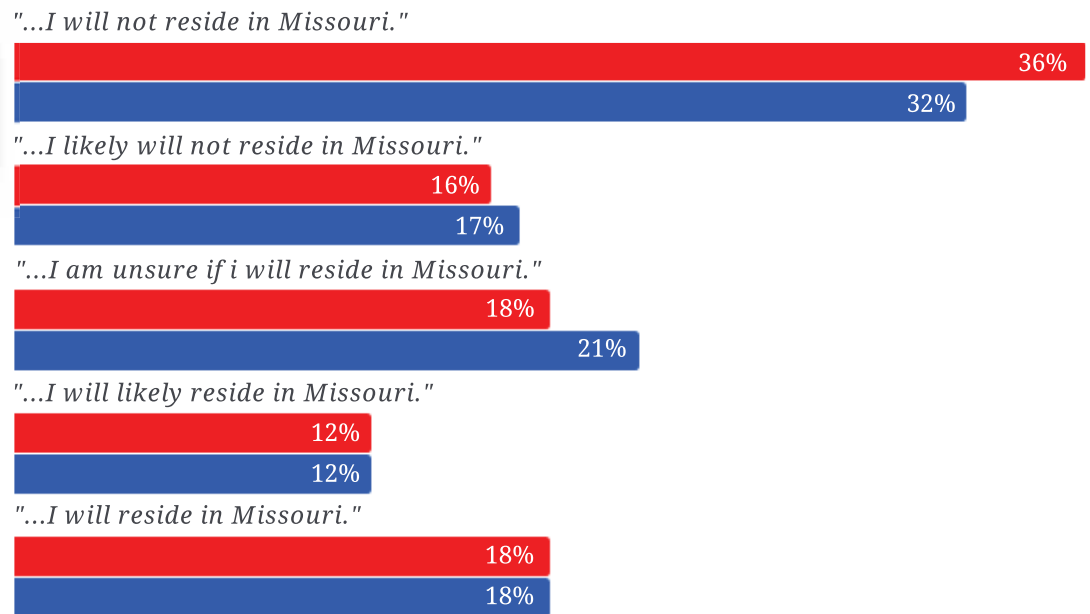
FINDING #3- Following a ten-minute presentation explaining a sample of Missouri programs and policies designed to support military servicemembers and their families, survey respondents' desire to remain in Missouri following separation from the military increased.

RECOMMENDATION #3 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri develop a comprehensive plan to educate all incoming servicemembers and their families about state programs and policies designed for their benefit while they are stationed in Missouri and upon separation.

Although the percentage was modest, a number of survey respondents reported a higher likelihood of remaining in Missouri after just a ten-minute presentation on the state's military-friendly policies and programs. As indicated above, most servicemembers had decided where to reside at least 12 months prior to separation. The education plan should begin when servicemembers arrive to any Missouri military installation.

**"Upon separation
from the military..."**

- Pre-presentation response
- Post-presentation response



FINDING #4- Survey respondents reported equal post-military decision-making influence among the servicemember, their spouse, and their family.

RECOMMENDATION #4 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri focus its efforts equally on developing programs and policies that support military servicemembers, their spouses, and military families.

While not to detract from the importance of directly supporting military servicemembers, the data suggest that the servicemember's influence on deciding where to reside upon separation from the military is equal to that of his or her family members. Additional programs that support military spouses and family members could be developed to enhance the state's attractiveness to those who may be leading the decision-making during this stage in the family cycle.

FINDING #5- Survey respondents reported their top three priorities for deciding where to reside upon separation from the military were 1) employment opportunities, 2) proximity to family, and 3) cost of living.

RECOMMENDATION #5 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri design additional programs and policies that support the reported priorities of servicemembers and their spouses.

While it could prove difficult to retain a transitioning servicemember in the state if their family is rooted elsewhere, the data in this study suggest that the greatest opportunity could be by providing a pathway to gainful employment. Even participants who reported an unwillingness to remain in the state upon separation from the military were willing to reconsider for an employment opportunity. Additionally, many participants reported low satisfaction with Missouri's tax structure in relation to incentives available in other states.

FINDING #6 - Focus group participants reported low satisfaction with the transferability of skills/credentials from 1) the military to civilian sector, for themselves, and 2) from state to state, for their spouses.

RECOMMENDATION #6 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri create additional pathways to employment for servicemembers and their spouses.

Possible steps toward accomplishing this would be 1) increasing the civilian sector's understanding of the transferability of military job skills, and 2) increasing the rate and ease of acceptance of professional credentials from other states. Additionally, while there are state policies and programs in place that incentivize the hiring of military veterans, there is no clear "pipeline" for servicemembers stationed at a Missouri installation that would lead to them landing a civilian job within the state.

FINDING #7- Many focus group participants reported their desire to concurrently pursue full-time employment and postsecondary education upon separating from the military.

RECOMMENDATION #7 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri explore potential programs that could increase a separating servicemember's ability to pursue full-time employment and educational opportunities concurrently.

Currently, there are several policies and programs available to servicemembers who wish to pursue a career OR an education upon separation from the military. Many focus group participants expressed a desire for policies or programs that would support pursuing both a career AND an education concurrently. Additional research may be needed to explore programs that could assist servicemembers with meeting both their employment and educational goals upon separation from the military.

FINDING #8- Participants reported that the Missouri Returning Heroes Act would have been very influential in their decision about where to reside following separation from the military, but due to its strict requirements for qualification, most reported that they would not qualify for the program.

RECOMMENDATION #8 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri redefine the qualifications for the Missouri Returning Heroes Act to additionally make the program available to servicemembers who separate from the military while assigned to a Missouri installation.

Survey respondents selected Missouri's Returning Heroes Act as one of the most influential programs or policies when determining where to reside upon separation from the military. Yet, during the focus group discussions, many participants reported that they would not qualify for this program. They named 1) the Missouri residency requirement and 2) the requirement for service in a combat zone as barriers to accessing this benefit.

FINDING #9 - Participants' perceptions of the state of Missouri are highly influenced by the town/region immediately surrounding the military installation to which they are assigned.

RECOMMENDATION #9 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri introduce servicemembers and their families to opportunities that represent more of what the Show-Me State has to offer than what can be found in the areas immediately surrounding its military installations.

When asked about their willingness to live in Missouri upon separation from the military, the study participants indicated that they closely associated Missouri's employment, cultural, and recreational offerings with those most readily available near the military installation to which they were assigned. The state may wish to intentionally introduce servicemembers and their families to additional opportunities located throughout the state.

FINDING #10- Many participants reported positive perceptions of programs and policies available in states other than Missouri that support military servicemembers and their families.

RECOMMENDATION #10 - It is recommended that the state of Missouri investigate the programs and policies designed to support military servicemembers and their families available in other states for possible adoption in this state.

Many focus group participants referenced programs or policies available in states other than Missouri, such as Illinois, Texas, and California. In some instances, participants seemed to be more aware of policies available in other states than they were of Missouri's own military-friendly policies. Additional research is needed to determine what programs and policies that support military servicemembers and their families are available in other states, including the perceptions of such policies by the individuals they are designed to serve.

RESEARCH APPROACH *and* METHODOLOGY

POLICY REVIEW

For the first phase of the study, the research team met with representatives from the various Missouri state departments at a meeting organized by the Office of the Missouri Military Advocate. During this meeting, points of contact were shared and initial policies and programs that serve military populations were identified. Following the meeting, researchers began a comprehensive review of the state policies and programs designed to support military servicemembers and their families by reviewing web content and following up with departmental representatives. The relevant programs and policies were compiled into a single document, edited for length and format, and organized by the department through which they are administered.

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

The second phase of the study consisted of the collection of quantitative data through a 35-question survey administered to 206 military servicemembers and their spouses. The survey questions queried the respondents on their interest in residing in the state of Missouri upon separation from the military, in addition to posing questions on their awareness and perception of a sample of the Missouri state policies that support military servicemembers and their families. Survey respondents also provided important demographic information that can be used to better understand the population sampled.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

During the third phase, the researchers held semi-structured focus group discussions with many of the same survey respondents who elected to participate in the additional data collection. The focus group discussions centered on the question: What programs or policies would encourage you to reside in the state of Missouri upon separation of the military? These important discussions allowed the researchers to gather information that could not be captured through a multiple-choice survey instrument. Digital recorders were used during the focus group sessions to capture the content of the discussions.

DATA ANALYSIS

During the final phase of the study, researchers compiled the quantitative data collected from each survey session into an aggregate set in order to perform statistical analyses. Researchers also transcribed the qualitative data collected with the digital recorders into a readable text that could be analyzed. Once the data were sorted as such, researchers then applied principles of quantitative and qualitative data analysis in order to arrive at a number of findings that are suggested by the data set. Based on these findings, the researchers then drafted recommendations for action.

RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

Prior to the collection of any data, this study was reviewed and approved by the University of Central Missouri's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The purpose of the IRB is to ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of all human subjects that participate in research. The IRB reviews research applications and proposals involving human subjects to ensure the rights of the subjects are not violated and that the research conforms to the Code of Federal Regulations.

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